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COUNTRY Germany (Soviet Zone)

REPORT NO.

TOPIC Military Information from the Rossau Maneuver Area

EVALUATION 25X1

PLACE OBTAINED

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DATE OF CONTENT 9 to 12 October 1950

DATE OBTAINED 25X1 DATE PREPARED 8 November 1950

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REFERENCES

PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) 1 - sketch on ditto

REMARKS

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1. On 9 October 1950 it was learned that the perimeter of the maneuver area touched the towns of Aken, Magdeburg, Altengraben, Wittenberg and Rossau. The troops engaged in the maneuvers were said to have come from Koethen, Zerbst, Wittenberg and Rossau. The maneuver area had been placed off limits to all traffic, including pedestrians. Civilian motorists were informed by Volkspolizei personnel that the Rossau-Wiesenburg road was blocked from 6 to 10 October, highway No 184 from Dessau to Magdeburg, the Dessau Neekow-Aken road and highway No 187 from Rossau to Wittenberg between 9 and 11 October 1950. Security measures along the perimeter of the maneuver area were much stricter than in the fall of 1949. *
2. On 9 October 1950 units from the Altengraben troop training ground marched to the maneuver area. The area north of the Rossau-Weinsdorf-Thiessen line was blocked to all civilian traffic, including pedestrians. The restriction on traffic was enforced by Volkspolizei personnel. It was said that the maneuvers involved about 300 tanks. Six generals were seen. The troops from Altengraben moved to their assembly points via the area of Lindau-Loburg-Klein Leitzkau-Juetrichau-Prambach-Rietzmeck. Heavy artillery fire started at nightfall and continued throughout the night. At 7 p.m. a convoy of 25 trucks with troops, 3 light AT guns, 2 field kitchens and 2 SP guns passed through Rossau and moved toward Zerbst. The artillery fire continued until 10 a.m. on 11 October 1950. Afterwards the troops crossed the Elbe River in amphibious vehicles, heading westward. A bridge was later thrown across the river. The exercise ended on the evening of 11 October 1950. During the day 16 single-engine aircraft, 8 twin-engine aircraft and 16 jet fighters participated in the exercise. Four air force trucks were observed heading toward Zerbst.
3. The troops left the maneuver area on 12 October 1950. T-34 tanks were loaded on three trains in Aken. Thirty-five heavy artillery pieces, including 100-mm guns and 150-mm howitzers, were loaded on three trains over makeshift ramps along the line between Juetrichau and Tornau.

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Thirty-six heavy guns were loaded on three trains at the Rosslau freight station. Of those loaded in Rosslau, the first train was loaded with one jeep and two trucks [redacted]

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4. Motor vehicles observed during the maneuvers between 9 and 12 October 1950 had [redacted]

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* [redacted] Comment. According to reports [redacted] the following maneuvers were conducted in the area specified during the first half of October 1950. The maneuvers are believed to have been held independent of each other.
Magdeburg-Altongrabow-Dessau-Aken area: Maneuvers primarily involving elements of the Third Shock Army. [redacted]
Area east of Wittenberg: Stream-crossing practices of elements of the Third Gds Mecz Army. [redacted] headquarters units of the Third Gds Mecz Army, elements of the 6th and 8th Gds Tank Divs, the 6th Arty Div, the 2d Gds AAA Div and the AAA Div of the Third Gds Mecz Army participated in the practices. [redacted]
For sketch of maneuver area see Annex.

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** [redacted] Comment. The information supplements the general data on the fall maneuvers of the Third Shock Army, given in paragraph 1 of subject report. It strengthens the previous assumption that these maneuvers also included major stream-crossing practices. The crossing of the Elbe River on 11 October 1950 took place after heavy artillery preparation. according to [redacted] subject report, the units participating in these exercises included headquarters units of the Third Shock Army and the IX Mtz Rifle Corps and elements of the 18th Mecz Div, the 94th Gds Mtz Rifle Div, the 207th Mtz Rifle Div, the 6th Arty Div, the artillery division from Potsdam and the 6th Gds AAA Div. Compare a report stating that tank components of the 207th Mtz Rifle Div were loaded in Stendal on 30 September 1950 and shipped toward Magdeburg. [redacted]
Since [redacted] the 14th Gds Mecz Div were also observed in the maneuver area, it is possible that elements of this division, which is a component of the Third Gds Mecz Army, may have participated in the exercises. Compare a report [redacted] which stated that a series of troop trains started moving from Justerbog and Forst Zinna to the Halle railroad district on 4 October 1950. [redacted]

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It is believed that the trains dispatched from the Jucterlog area mostly carried components of the 14th Sds Mecz Div which were to take part in the maneuvers. However, subject report fails to give any leads as to whether elements of the 19th Sds Mecz Div were also engaged in the maneuvers. Since units of this division had been loaded on trains in Waldonsleben in late September and early October 1950, but had not arrived at their home station of Wunsdorf, it is still believed that they also participated in the fall maneuvers of the Third Shock Army. [REDACTED]

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25X1 *** [REDACTED] Comment. The report indicates that GHQ units, primarily artillery and engineer units, also participated in the maneuvers of the two armies. The unidentified engineer regiment of the GOFG from Potsdam-Nedlitz left its post as early as the beginning of September 1950, going to the Elbe River for exercises. [REDACTED] The GHQ engineer units from Dessau left their post in early October 1950 to participate in the maneuvers. 25X1 [REDACTED] Available information indicates that the maneuvers in the Magdeburg-Wittenberg-Dessau area were completed by 15 October 1950. 25X1 [REDACTED] Subject report also states that the troops in the maneuver area started departing on 12 October 1950.

1 Annex: 1 - sketch on ditto.

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